

Message Text

SECRET

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14-11
ACTION SS-25

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EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MASS, SU, SA
SUBJECT: MAJOR SAUDI MILITARY GRANT AID FOR SUDAN

BEGIN SUMMARY: BARRING LAST-MINUTE HITCH, PRESIDENT NIMEIRI REPORTEDLY WILL ANNOUNCE ON MAY 25 ANNIVERSARY OF REVOLUTION A SAUDI GOVT. GRANT OF ALMOST 100 MILLION STERLING (SOME \$230 MILLION) TO BE DEVOTED TO IMPROVING MOBILITY AND COMMUNICATIONS OF PEOPLE'S ARMED FARCES (PAF). LONG-PENDING DEAL APPARENTLY CAME TO FRUITION HERE MAY 19 WHEN NIMEIRI RECEIVED SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM KING KHALID AND LATER WAS VISITED BY SAUDI TYCOON ADNAN KHASHOGGI. SPECIAL INTEREST SAUDIS IN DEAL REPORTEDLY LIES IN SOME SORT UNDERSTANDING THAT PAF MIGHT BE AVAILABLE IN EXTREMIS TO AID SAUDI DEPUTY PRIMIN FAHD AND MINDEF SULTAN AGAINST ANY HYPOTHETICAL CHALLENGE ON PART PRINCE ABDULLA'S NATIONAL GUARD. REPORTED DEAL WOULD NOT ONLY BENEFIT MILITARY BUT ALSO NIMEIRI PERSONALLY BY HELPING ASSURE HIM CONTINUED SUPPORT AMONG SUDANESE MILITARY.
END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT NIMEIRI RECEIVED SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM KING KHALID EARLY MAY 19 AND LATER IN DAY LIGHTNING VISIT FROM PERIPATETIC SAUDI TYCOON ADNAN KHASHOGGI (ACCOMPANIED BY NIMEIRI'S SPECIAL "COUNSELLOR" SALIM GIBRAN EISA). I WAS

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RELIABLY INFORMED MAY 20 THAT THIS SPECIAL ACTIVITY IS

RELATED IN PART TO A SAG GRANT OF ALMOST 100 MILLION STERLING (SOME \$230 MILLION) TO BE DEVOTED TO IMPROVING BOTH MOBILITY AND COMMUNICATIONS OF PAF. BARRING LAST-MINUTE HITCH, NIMEIRI EXPECTED MAKE DRAMATIC ANNOUNCEMENT THIS DEAL DURING CELEBRATION MAY 25 ANNIVERSARY REGIME'S COMING TO POWER.

2. ACCORDING REPORT, SAG GRANT WILL BE ALLOCATED AS FOLLOWS: (A) \$115 MILLION FOR MILITARY VEHICLES (FIRST PHASE OF WHICH IS \$34 MILLION); (B) \$4.8 MILLION MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS NET; AND (C) BALANCE FOR MILITARY MOBILITY, POSSIBLY INCLUDING TROOP CARRYING AIRCRAFT. GERMAN FIRM DEUTZ IS TO BE AWARDED VEHICLE CONTRACT IN ORDER TO STANDARDIZE ON SAME VEHICLES AS EGYPTIAN ARMY AND NO DOUBT MORE IMPRTANTLY BECAUSE KHASHOGGI'S TRIAD SUBSIDIARY HERE IS LOCAL AGENT FOR DEUTZ. SPECIMAN DEUTZ VEHICLES REPORTEDLY TO BE FEATURED IN MAY 25 PARADE. PAGE COMMUNICATIONS, WHICH HAS HAD THE COMMUNICATIONS CONTRACT, BUT NO DOWN PAYMENT, FOR OVER A YEAR WILL ERECT SO-CALLED "STATIC SYSTEM" (FOR DETAILS SEE KHARTOUM A-21 OF MARCH 13, 1974, AND REFERENCE THREREIN). BALANCE FUNDS APPARENTLY NOT YET ALLOCATED BUT EXPECTED BE DEVOTED TO ADDITIONAL MILITARY MOBILITY, SUCH AS TROOP CARRYING AIRCRAFT (AND, WE SUSPECT, VEHICLES FOR POLICE FOR WHICH REQUEST WAS MADE TO USG A YEAR AGO).

3. AS INDICATED KHARTOUM A-21, DEAL HAS BEEN UNDER DISCUSSION FOR 18 MONTHS, PROMPTED BY KHASHOGGI'S RELATIONSHIP WITH PRINCE FAHD. HOWEVER, OPPOSITION ON PART OF THE LATE OMAR SAQQAF, AND PERHAPS KING FAISAL HIMSELF, SAID TO HAVE DELAYED ITS REALIZATION. FAHD REPORTEDLY HAS SPECIAL INTEREST IN DEAL IN TERMS SOME SORT UNDERSTANDING WITH NIMEIRI THAT PAF WOULD BE PREPARED COME TO ASSISTANCE FAHD AND MINDEF SULTAN SHOULD THIS EVER BE REQUIRED TO COUNTER-BALANCE A THREAT FROM PRINCE ABDULLA AND NATIONAL GUARD.

4. COMMENT. SUDANESE MILITARY HAVE BEEN HAMPERED BY OUTMODED RUSSIAN EQUIPMENT AND ABSENCE ADEQUATE COMMUNICATIONS LINKS AMONG MAJOR COMMANDS. REPORTED SAUDI LARGESSE WOULD NOT ONLY CORRECT THESE DEFICIENCIES BUT WOULD REPRESENT BY FAR LARGEST SINGLE ITEM OF GRANT AID RECEIVED BY

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SUDAN FROM AN ARAB OIL STATE. SINCE IT APPEARS REFLECT HAPPY CONJUNCTION PERSONAL INTERESTS OF NIMEIRI, FAHD/SULTAN AND KHASHOGGI, I EXPECT DEAL TO GO THROUGH AS PLANNED. IT WILL NOT ONLY PROVIDE NIMEIRI WITH DRAMATIC CAPSTONE TO HIS REVOLUTIONARY ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS BUT NO DOUBT WILL BOOST HIS ALREADY SOLID SUPPORT IN PAF AND GIVE HIM SECURE "EXECUTIVE NETWORK" AS PART PAGE CONTRACT. EXTENT TO WHICH FAHD/SULTAN MAY REGARD SUDANESE MILITARY AS

MEANINGFUL COUNTERWEIGHT TO SAUDI NATIONAL GUARD MAY WELL BE LESS THAN SOURCE STATES AND IN ANY CASE CAN BE BETTER ASSESSED BY AMBASSADOR AKINS. SINCE KHASHOGGI'S TRIAD SUBSIDIARY HERE HAS HAD HEAVY WEATHER, HE MAY WILL HAVE BEEN PRESSING FAHD TO FINANCE THIS SUDANESE MILITARY MODERNIZATION NOT ONLY FOR AGENCY FEES BUT ALSO TO ASSURE FAVORABLE GOS CLIMATE FOR TRIAD ON OTHER PROJECTS.

5. AS COMMUNICATIONS CONTRACT INVOLVES USG MUNITIONS CONTROL ITEMS (OUR A-21), I WISH RENEW RECOMMENDATION CONTAINED THEREIN THAT THIS SALE, WHICH EXPECTED BECOME FINAL SHORTLY, SHOULD RECEIVE MC APPROVAL.

BREWER

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED SECRETARY.

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